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DD/S 70-0308

26 JAN 1970

REGISTRY
FILE *Training 3-2*

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Communications
Director of Finance
Director of Logistics
Director of Medical Services
Director of Personnel
Director of Security
Director of Training

SUBJECT : Written Report of Problem Solving Seminar
No. 4

1. Forwarded with this memorandum is a copy of Subject report.
2. I propose that we meet on Thursday, 12 February at 1000 hours in the DD/S Conference Room to discuss the Seminar recommendations. Subsequent to our discussion I will issue instructions for implementation of those recommendations which are approved. To facilitate the discussion, I would like from each of you written comments on the Seminar reports by close of business 6 February 1970.

SIGNED R. L. Bannerman

R. L. Bannerman
Deputy Director
for Support

Attachment

cc: DD/S-CMO

DD/S-SOS [] ng (26 Jan 70)

Distribution:

Orig - D/Commo w/att.

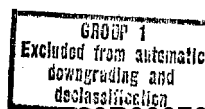
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1 - DD/S-SOS w/att. (DD/S 70-0252 - subj:
same as above)

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70-0252

20 January 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

FROM : Members of Support Directorate Problem Solving Seminar No. 4

SUBJECT : Written Report of Problem Solving Seminar No. 4

25X1 1. Attached is the report of findings and recommendations of the fourth Support Directorate Problem Solving Seminar which met at [redacted] 14 to 19 December 1969. A second attachment lists the ideas from a brain-storming session which was mentioned in the oral report on 5 January 1970. The list is included here as an example of the many ideas that arose during the seminar. Lack of time prevented a full exploration of all of the possibilities.

2. The oral and written reports represent the efforts of the members of the seminar. These members are:



Office of Communications
Office of Finance
Office of Logistics
Office of Medical Services
Office of Personnel
Office of Security
Office of Training

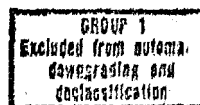
Attachments:

1. Seminar Report
2. Brain-storming ideas

Distribution:

- 8 - O/DDS
- 7 - Offices of Support Directorate
- 7 - Members
- 1 - MTF (Attn: [redacted])
- 1 - Mr. [redacted]

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REPORT OF
SUPPORT DIRECTORATE SEMINAR (PROBLEM SOLVING) - NUMBER 4

The problem - "WHAT STEPS CAN BE TAKEN TO ENSURE OPEN AND MUTUALLY UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN SUPPORT DIRECTORATE MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS AND THE YOUNG PROFESSIONAL AND HOW CAN YOUNG PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES BE INCREASINGLY INVOLVED IN MAJOR PROBLEMS AND THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS."

1. In facing the task posed by the problem, our group concluded that, before attempting to reach decisions on the issue, a definition of "young professional" would be required. For the purpose of this discussion the term will apply to the approximately 450 professional individuals in the Organization who have entered the Support Directorate since 1964, the first year of the Support Career Training program. (Personnel statistics reveal that of the 450 people who meet our criteria, 140 are actually Career Trainees.)

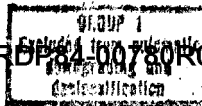
2. The problem was divided into two objectives, primarily because one part of the problem requires improvement in current policies and practices while the other requires innovations and new measures to be instituted.

Objective A - Identify and enumerate positive measures that may be taken to improve communications between Support Directorate management and the young professional, and,

Objective B - To offer ways in which the young professional may become more involved and participate in the decision-making process.

3. Seminar members decided that a full exploration of Objective A, how to improve present communications between Support Directorate management and young professionals, would quite naturally lead to ways that would allow the experienced officers and their successors to work together in the decision-making process, Objective B. Thus, if you could improve communications throughout the organization, you would improve it between the young professional and management. It became evident that we would not come up with any earth-shaking solutions

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Continued

but that we would at least identify those barriers to effective communication where identification itself could lead to a lessening of the problem, if not to a solution.

4. What are the barriers to effective interchange of information and ideas? They may be identified as the Attitude of the Manager and of the Young Professional, the Credibility Gap, and the Reluctance to Delegate Authority.

OBJECTIVE A - IDENTIFY AND ENUMERATE POSITIVE MEASURES
THAT MAY BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN
SUPPORT DIRECTORATE MANAGEMENT AND THE YOUNG
PROFESSIONAL

5. BARRIER A - Managerial Attitude

Most managers realize problems of communication exist and have taken steps to establish direct, informative channels to lower echelons. However when management bypasses the chain of communication downward the supervisor often is the last to know about changes affecting the people in his section. We feel that senior management has conscientiously strived for effective communications with the young professional but may have overreached itself in the process by bypassing the chain of communication. The young professional's confidence in his supervisor can be improved if the immediate higher echelon of authority is the channel utilized to reach him.

Some supervisors are unwilling to be open minded and receptive to the ideas of young professionals (particularly the Career Trainee). This hostility and resentment may stem from an imagined threat to the supervisor's position, responsibility, and possibly to his security - the threat coming from one he believes is earmarked for speedy promotions because of training or higher education.

This attitude-type barrier is not universal, but does appear often enough to warrant concern. An honest and realistic effort must be made to place young employees with supervisors who will be receptive to new ideas and who will provide the necessary direction and guidance to help the young professional develop in his career.

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SUBJ: Report of Support Directorate Seminar Problem Solving - Number 4,
Continued

Arbitrarily assigning young officers to positions without carefully considering all factors, can create unnecessary communication problems.

Recommendations

1. Management should foster strong adherence to the chain of communication both upward and downward.
 2. Select positions and supervisors for the assignment and direction of young professionals. This will prevent indiscriminate assignment and the inherent danger of placing the young professional in an environment stifling to him and his ideas.
 3. Every employee in a supervisory capacity should be rated specifically on his ability to communicate face-to-face, not only with equals and superiors but also with those subordinate to him.
6. BARRIER B - Young Professional Attitude

At times impatient, yet possessing the desire to participate, the young professional often fails to recognize all the ramifications inherent in the real problem. He, too, must contribute to effective communications and attempt to understand the existing system.

Recommendations

1. During early training, the young professional should be encouraged to become more sensitive to working with people. Instruction in "How to Listen" and sensitivity-type training should be added to the early training program.
2. His office of assignment should encourage him to study correspondence and reports covering current organizational problems and the methods and techniques used in solving the problems.

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SUBJ: Report of Support Directorate Seminar Problem Solving - Number 4,
Continued

7. BARRIER C - The Credibility Gap

This subject concerns the implied promise versus reality. "Where is the challenging professional career that I expected?", the young professional often asks. From the time of recruitment, while in training, and on the way to initial assignment the young professional - through implication and special treatment - has been led to believe that he will be assigned to a position offering challenge, requiring use of his imagination, intelligence and background. In certain cases the young professional feels these promises have not been fulfilled. Conversely, there are also indications that the young officer is treated as a future leader without educating him to the fact that the road to leadership involves routine and mundane tasks.

Recommendations

1. More accurate forecasting of recruiting requirements to minimize the hiring of over-qualified personnel.
2. Provide the young professional with meaningful assignments and with a clear definition of responsibilities.
3. Inform the young professional what he can realistically expect in terms of career.
4. Periodically survey the job attitude of the young professional and review those categories which describe his reactions to the assignment.

8. BARRIER D - Reluctance to Delegate Authority

Management's reluctance to delegate authority to supervisors tends to create dissatisfaction, a deterioration of morale, and a breakdown in communication. Some of the causes for this reluctance are the lack of knowledge and/or confidence in subordinates, too many layers of supervisory control, and fear of criticism from higher echelons.

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Continued

Recommendations

1. Clarify supervisory responsibilities and authority to eliminate overlapping of responsibilities and uncertainty on the part of the supervisor.
2. Encourage management to learn as much as possible about its people and give the supervisors below an opportunity to demonstrate their managerial abilities.
3. A management review to reduce the numerous layers of supervisory control could reduce "bottlenecks" and improve communications up and down the line.
4. Clear, concise instructions and communications from management should tend to minimize fear of criticism on the part of the supervisor, enabling him to communicate to the young professional what management desires. If supervisors know what is expected of them, they will be confident the word they pass down is accurate.

OBJECTIVE B - TO OFFER WAYS IN WHICH THE YOUNG PROFESSIONAL MAY BECOME MORE INVOLVED AND PARTICIPATE IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.

9. The identification of barriers to achieving our first objective provides several sound ideas that bear on the second objective. Realizing this, seminar members felt the young professional could be more involved in problems and the decision-making process if Support Directorate senior management learned of some of the thoughts and ideas of the young officer. Efforts were made to find ways in which this input could be accomplished so that it would be meaningful and fresh.

10. The exposure of the young professional, in his early career, to problems and decision making is a necessary and vital step in his development. This employee is a refreshing and vitally needed addition to the Agency family. For one thing, he seeks an opportunity to challenge and, if possible, improve the environment in which he finds himself. He

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Continued

is impatient with what he considers inefficiency and does not want to be bound by what appears to be outmoded Agency tradition. He is anxious to be heard and will be equipped with the latest educational and technological theory. It seems evident, therefore, that management should involve this employee in decision making. It is likely that input from him may be of significant value.

11. The following recommendations indicate some ways whereby management at all levels within the Directorate may derive from the young officer the input that creates interest, generates involvement, and provides personal job satisfaction:

1. The DDS should meet periodically with mixed groups of young officers who have been on the job for a period of at least six months and their first line supervisors to discuss matters of mutual interest.
2. Encourage similar meetings by office heads with their young professionals.
3. Assign a young officer to the DDS staff for a tour of duty on a rotating basis.
4. Create a revolving body of these professionals similar in objectives to the Management Advisory Group and encourage formation of similar groups at the Office level.
5. Convene seminars of young officers to consider problems similar to the one being treated here.

12. In conclusion, while these findings are not all inclusive nor do they offer any revolutionary concepts for curing the ills of interpersonal communications, they do represent an attempt to point up some of the inhibiting factors which are cause for concern. All levels and categories of employees are affected by barriers identified, but our efforts have been concentrated primarily on those areas where communications problems relate to the young professional. He comes to the Support

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SUBJ: Report of Support Directorate Seminar Problem Solving - Number 4.
Continued

Directorate fired with excitement, enthusiasm, and ideas which have been instilled within him by his formal education, training, and indoctrination. Soon after his arrival with us he is expected to make a reasonably smooth transition to a professional career. The importance of his first office of assignment and first supervisor in making this transition cannot be over-emphasized. We hold this to be the most critical moment in his development. Therefore, his first assignment and the qualifications of his first supervisor should become a matter of prime concern to management.

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BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

The subject of communications is so intertwined with morale and organizational climate that there are few textbook solutions. We took some time therefore to brainstorm the topic, that is to come up with ideas without any evaluation. The following are some ideas that emerged:

Peer Group Meetings
Compulsive Editors
Critique Supervisors Communication
Ability Upwards
I'd Rather Do It Myself
Unrealistic Deadlines
Face to Face Communications Course
More Study Groups
Publish Promotion Lists
Publish Job Vacancies
More Problem Solving Seminars -
Mix the Grades
DDS Brief Support People
Meet the People
Assign By Qualifications
Personnel Newsletters - DDS and Office
More Management and Supervisory Training
Keep Open Mind
No Cliques
Ombudsman
Agency De-Centralization
Misuse of "Need-to-Know"
The "No Answer"

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